

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 *Sub A<sup>4</sup>* 1. A method of manufacturing an air bag cover assembly, the  
 2 method comprising:  
 3 providing a front panel, a back plate, a switch and infrared-absorbing  
 4 material;  
 5 positioning the front panel and the back plate so that inner surfaces of  
 6 the front panel and the back plate define a switch pocket therebetween;  
 7 positioning the switch in the switch pocket;  
 8 directing infrared radiation at the infrared-absorbing material for a  
 9 time sufficient to heat the infrared-absorbing material to a desired temperature;  
 10 controlling the amount of heat applied to the infrared-absorbing  
 11 material by the infrared radiation; and  
 12 cooling the heated infrared-absorbing material, the cooled material  
 13 fixedly securing the back plate to the front panel.

1 2. The method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step  
 2 of forcing the heated infrared-absorbing material to flow prior to the step of cooling.

1 3. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the back plate  
 2 includes a plurality of spaced holes extending therethrough and wherein the infrared-  
 3 absorbing material forms a plurality of stakes connected to the inner surface of the  
 4 front panel and extending through the plurality of spaced holes and wherein the  
 5 heated infrared-absorbing material forms a plurality of solid connectors after the step  
 6 of cooling.

1 4. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the infrared-  
 2 absorbing material is a heat-activated adhesive and wherein the method further  
 3 comprises applying the adhesive to at least one of the inner surfaces.

1 5. A system of manufacturing an air bag cover assembly including  
 2 a front panel, a back plate, a switch and infrared-absorbing material, the system  
 3 comprising:

4 at least one infrared lamp for emitting infrared radiation;  
5 a base including a fixture mounted thereon for receiving and retaining  
6 the front panel and the back plate so that inner surfaces of the front panel and the  
7 back plate define a switch pocket therebetween; and  
8 a controlled coupled to the at least one infrared lamp for controlling  
9 power supplied to the at least one infrared lamp so that the at least one infrared lamp  
10 emits infrared radiation at the infrared-absorbing material for a time sufficient to heat  
11 the infrared-absorbing material to a desired temperature, wherein the heated infrared-  
12 absorbing material bonds the plastic parts together when cooled.

1 6. The system as claimed in claim 5 further comprising a  
2 mechanism mounted for movement relative to the base for forcing the heated  
3 infrared-absorbing material to flow.

1 7. The system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the back plate  
2 includes a plurality of spaced holes extending therethrough and wherein the infrared-  
3 absorbing material forms a plurality of stakes connected to the inner surface of the  
4 front panel and extending through the plurality of spaced holes and wherein the  
5 heated infrared-absorbing material forms a plurality of solid connectors when cooled.

1 8. The system as claimed in claim 5 wherein the infrared-  
2 absorbing material is a heat-activated adhesive.